

# FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT 1909, OF THE AMERI- CAN SCENIC AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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TO THE LEGISLATURE OF  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK



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## APPENDIX D.

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### KANADESAGA.

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An Historical Sketch of the Indian Landmarks at Geneva, N. Y.

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By the Secretary of the  
American Scenic and Historic Preservation  
Society.

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Just 300 years ago, two distinct branches of European civilization came into contact with the Indians of New York State, approaching from diametrically opposite directions and under diametrically opposite circumstances. Champlain, under commission from the King of France, entered the State from the north with a war party of Hurons and signalized his advent by a bloody conflict with the Iroquois on the shores of Lake Champlain in August, 1609. In September, Henry Hudson, an Englishman sailing under Dutch auspices, entered the river which perpetuates his name, and at its headwaters held a friendly feast with Iroquois chiefs which remained in their traditions for 250 years. The radical difference in the treatment which the New York State Indians received at the hands of these explorers from the north and the south exerted a powerful influence in predisposing them in favor of the Dutch and English pioneers and in preventing the French from obtaining a permanent foothold in the State of New York.

The Iroquois played such a prominent part in the history of the State during the ensuing 175 years, that at this Tercentenary period every item of history and tradition about the aborigines possesses a peculiar interest, and one of the valuable results expected to be produced by the Lake Champlain Tercentenary and the Hudson River Tercentenary celebrations this year is the

identification of sites and the preservation of monuments and relics of the "first families" of New York.

During the past year, the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society has caused a survey to be made for the purpose of locating with precision the site of the ancient Seneca castle of Kanadesaga and certain other Indian landmarks at Geneva, N. Y. (see page 111) and the purpose of the following pages is to recall something of the history which invests those landmarks with interest.\*

Three hundred years ago, the territory of the Seneca Nation was bounded on the North by Lake Ontario, on the east by a line about midway between Seneca and Cayuga lakes, on the south by an indefinite line varying from twenty to thirty miles north of the Pennsylvania border, and on the west by the Genesee river. Later, upon the expulsion of the Neuter and Erie Indians from the region west of the Genesee, the domain of the Senecas embraced all of New York State west of a north-and-south line just east of Seneca lake.

Kanadesaga, the last capital of the Senecas, was situated about west-northwest of the northwestern bend of the foot of Seneca lake, 1.8 miles from the shore, on a slightly elevation of 160 feet above the level of the lake. Its site is just west of the State Agricultural Experiment Station and adjacent to the city of Geneva, at a point more particularly indicated on the map accompanying this paper. Its location here was the result of a chain of events beginning with the invasion of New York by the Marquis de Denonville, Governor of Canada, in 1687.

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\* In the preparation of these pages, the writer has found a mine of information in a valuable collation of quotations and original notes made by Mr. George S. Conover, of Geneva, entitled "Kanadesaga; or Geneva." Of these data Mr. Conover prepared five copies, and presented one each to Hobart College, Geneva, the Buffalo Historical Society, the State Library at Albany, the Waterloo Library and Historical Society and the New York Historical Society.

*The Marquis de Denonville's Invasion.*

Denonville's invasion was incident to the desperate effort which the French were making at that time to countervail the successes of their English rivals and to restore the lost prestige of the French with the Iroquois. By superior inducements the English traders had secured through the Iroquois so much of the fur trade of the Great Lakes that Canada was on the verge of ruin. The French missionaries had been almost completely driven out of the Iroquois villages. And in 1686, the Iroquois had attacked the Hurons and Ottawas, called by the French "our most antient subjects," also the Illinois and Miami Indians on the Illinois. "The Senecas and English understand each other charmingly," said Denonville. The situation was such that the French considered that the French religion, commerce, and power over all North America depended upon the destruction of the Iroquois.

With that end in view, Denonville, with about 1,000 French troops and 2,000 Huron, Illinois and Ottawa Indians, landed at Irondequoit Bay in July, 1687, and after erecting a fort, marched south into the Seneca country. The Seneca Nation, numbering about 4,000 souls\* resided chiefly in four villages named Gannagaro, Gannogarae, Totiakton and Gannondata.

Gannagaro (the village ancestor of Kanadesaga), was the capital town, situated on Boughton Hill, a mile south of the village of Victor in Ontario county. This Indian village, whose name was variously spelled, was the "St. James" of the missionaries.

"Half a league distant from the said village of Gannagaro"—in which direction the documents do not say—there was a fort, "very advantageously situated on a hill."

Gannogarae was located at different dates from one and one-half to four miles south of the capital town. A site on the east side

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\* It is difficult to estimate accurately the population of the Senecas at this time. Denonville put it at 14,000 or 15,000, which was about the population of the whole Confederacy at that time. As the Senecas mustered 800 warriors, their population, reckoned on the basis of 1 to 5, would be about 4,000.

of Mud creek on the line between the towns of Canadaigua and East Bloomfield, about five miles southeast of Victor, appears to have been one site of this village. This village was also known as St. Michael.

Gannagaro and Gannogarae were the two eastern villages.

Totiakton, the most populous, was ten miles west of Gannagaro, near West Mendon in Monroe county. It was in the northeastern-most bend of Honeoye creek, one and three-fourths miles north of Honeoye Falls, exactly twelve and one-half miles in an air line south of the center of Rochester. Its missionary name was La Conception.

Gannondata (or St. John) was probably on the site of the present village of Lima, five miles south of the great town, when the latter was located near Honeoye Falls.

As Denonville's army advanced toward these villages, he met with some resistance from 800 Seneca warriors; but the latter, finding resistance useless, retreated, burning their villages behind them. Denonville completed the destruction by burning their corn; and having made proclamation at Totiakton on July 19 asserting the sovereignty of the King of France, retired to Canada, leaving the Seneca country desolate.

### *Village Migration and Change of Trail.*

After this disastrous visitation, the people of the two eastern villages migrated eastward and those of the two western villages westward and established new habitations. In 1700, Col. Romer found the Boughton Hill people re-established on what is known as the White Springs Farm, lying on the western border of the present city of Geneva. This settlement was known as Ganechstage. In 1720, they were visited here by Schuyler and Livingston and in 1726 by Capt. Evert Bancker.

The change of residence among the Senecas caused a corresponding change in the direction of the ancient trail which led from the Hudson river through the Confederacy to Lake Erie. Prior to

the dispersion of the villages by Denonville, the main trail, after passing around the foot of Seneca lake, took a northwesterly course through what are now known as Loomis' Woods, and thence continued to the principal village.

In Loomis' Woods, there was in former times a heap of stones which was undoubtedly a trail mark. It was situated about twenty rods north of North street and about 100 rods west of the Carter road. Mr. Henry H. Loomis (now ninety-two years of age) says that his father, who was one of the earliest settlers, often told him never to allow these stones to be moved, as they had been placed there originally by the Indians to mark the line of the trail.

When the Indians built their new village at Ganechstage, the trail, after coming around the foot of the lake, instead of continuing northwestward as before described, was changed to a southerly direction along the west shore of the lake. After passing the foot of the present Washington street, it ascended the bluff, took a westerly direction approximately along the line of Hamilton street and continued to Canandaigua. This trail passed a short distance to the north of Ganechstage, the White Springs being about one-half mile south of the trail. The old turnpike was laid out substantially along this trail from the Old Pre-emption road to Canandaigua. Near the Old Pre-emption road, another trail branched off to the southwestward and passed through Ferguson's Corners, thence to Conhocton, whence the voyager could travel by canoe down the Conhocton to the Chemung and Susquehanna. The present highway running southwesterly from the Old Pre-emption road is substantially on this trail.

#### *Ganechstage, the White Springs Settlement.*

Ganechstage, the settlement at White Springs, continued until 1732, when it suffered terribly from smallpox brought by a Seneca from Albany. After the death of a large number of inhabitants, the survivors moved to Burrell creek, or Slate Rock creek, two and three-fourths miles southwest of the White Springs.

In the journal of the Moravian missionaries Bishop Cammerhoff and David Zeisberger, who made a journey through western New York in 1750, they speak of arriving at the abandoned site of Ganechstage (White Springs) on Sunday, June 17 (or 28, N. S.). The journal says: "About four miles from the lake"—that is, about four miles from their last previous camping place at the outlet—"we came into the neighborhood of the site of the old city of Ganechstage, which is said to have been very large. \* \* \* It is a very beautiful tract of land with good springs of fresh water. It lies so high that we could see from here to Gajuka\* about fifty miles distant. From what we could see it must have been a very large city." A few isolated huts were still standing in 1750.

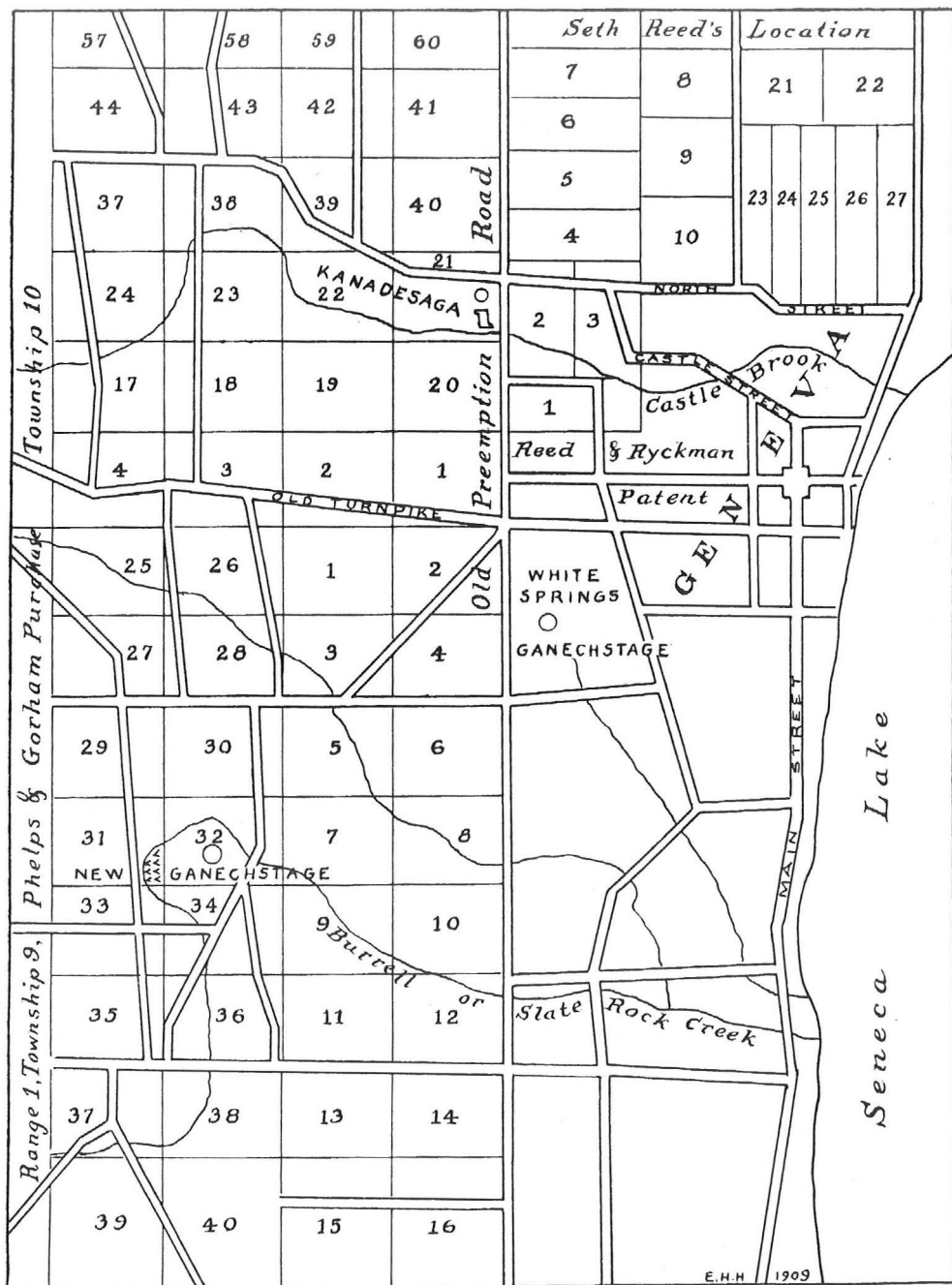
The White Springs farm derives its name from the beautifully clear springs which supply the city of Geneva with water.

For many years it was owned by Judge John Nicholas. In 1839 it was purchased from Robert C. Nicholas by Hon. Gideon Lee. The property remained in the possession of Mr. Lee's family until 1857 when it was purchased by the late James O. Sheldon, father of Mrs. Andrew H. Smith of Geneva. In 1870 it passed into possession of William and Thomas Smith. When the grounds were graded in 1842, numerous traces of the old Indian occupations were found. In a lane, opposite the site of the old carriage house now occupied by a later building, and near a tulip tree which is probably the tulip tree still standing, there was a burial mound, about three feet high, from which many skeletons were exhumed.

Another burial mound was located a short distance south of the one above mentioned, and west of and in front of the mansion, from one-fourth to one-third of the distance from the road to the house. This knoll was about four feet high and yielded many skeletons. As the bottom of the ossuary was not reached in the

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\* Cayuga.



LANDMARK MAP OF GENEVA (N. Y.) AND VICINITY.

The above is a substantial copy of an old map drawn on page 746 of volume III of George S. Conover's manuscript and scrap-book history of "Kanadesaga and Geneva" in the library of Hobart College, Geneva. It shows the relative location of Kanadesaga, Ganechstage and New Ganechstage. Geneva has grown materially since the original, which is not dated, was drawn.

grading, there are doubtless bones of the "first families" still interred there.

There are in the lawn gentle elevations of ground which strongly indicate other burial places.

Inquiry years ago among citizens conversant with the work and the workmen themselves elicited many interesting facts about these sites. Most of the bones taken from them appeared to have been those of adults and of a good sized race. In one or two instances they were of extraordinary size. It is estimated that four or five wagon-loads of bones and skulls, perhaps more, were removed, deposited in low places in the neighborhood and covered up.

Some degree of order appears to have been observed by the Indians in making these burials. Some of the bodies were buried in a sitting position and covered with a sandy loam brought from a distance, the natural formation at that point being a gravelly clay soil.

It is probable that many of these Indians died of the smallpox epidemic in 1732; and the plague having been recalled at the time of the exhumation, fear of contagion caused many of the workmen to handle the remains with greater care than appears to have proceeded from any respect for the memory of the dead.

Among the relics exhumed with the skeletons were many copper and brass kettles, varying in capacity from two to eight quarts. Some were full of holes \* but others were in a state of such good preservation as to be used by their finders for many years. Some of the smaller vessels appeared to have contained red paint. Others evidently contained food. In some cases, the form of grains of corn was easily recognized. These kettles were so numerous and so little prized at the time that a boy was permitted to take several wheel-barrow loads of them and sell them for the metal that was in them.

Arrowheads of flint and copper were also exhumed. The copper arrowheads were triangular in shape, about two inches long and

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\* Squier says that it was customary for the Indians to puncture vessels buried with the dead to prevent their being stolen for use again.

three-quarters of an inch wide. One of the copper points was found attached to part of a shaft, showing the manner of attachment. The point had been inserted in an opening in the end of the shaft and fastened by a piece of deer sinew running through the holes and around the shaft.

Gun-barrels, to the number of two dozen at least, were found. The barrels were badly rusted and the stocks badly decayed.

At least two dozen crosses are known to have been found, and doubtless many more were carried away by visitors. The crucifixes varied in size and character. One was made of brass, two inches long by one and one-half wide, the arms being one-quarter of an inch wide. On one side was represented the crucified Savior with a skull and crossbones under his feet and above the halo over his head the letters I N R I. On the other side was represented the Virgin Mary being crowned by two angels and overshadowed by the emblems of the Holy Ghost.

Another relic was an iron pipe, tubular in shape, narrowing toward the bottom. On the bottom was a screw by which it was once attached to a tomahawk.

Tomahawks, iron axes, stone axes, stone implements, pestles, pipes of many devices made from black, gray, brown and red stone and pottery, finger rings of copper, medals, earrings with religious devices, large quantities of beads, and trinkets made from red pipe-stone were also found. The iron axes were of the type introduced by the European traders and found extensively in the eastern states. They were wider at the edge than at the back, with an eye or hole for the handle at the back. One of these axes bore the fabricator's mark of the "three Dutch crosses." In 1667, Peter Stuyvesant referred to the use of hatchets in trade when he wrote to the Duke of York: "The trade of beaver (the most desirable commodity for Europe) hath allways been purchased from the Indyans by the Commodities brought from Holland, as Camper, Duffles, Hatchetts and other Iron worke made at Utrick & much esteemed by the natives."

During the ownership of Mr. Sheldon, while excavations were being made for the foundation of some new barns, Mr. Sheldon came upon some Indian graves in which were found various implements of war and articles of personal adornment. In a girl's grave were a jar of paint, many curious beads and a carved comb. In another were found a crucifix, a small cross and the beads of a rosary with the bones of a man, possibly those of a martyred missionary. By far the most interesting thing found was a curiously carved stone calumet. Unfortunately, this was broken in many pieces by the laborers in their efforts to learn its nature and composition. Since Mr. Lewis, the present owner of the White Springs farm, has occupied the place, a deputation from the Seneca Nation has called upon him to inquire if he would respect the graves of their fathers, which he gladly promised to do.

*New Ganechstage at Burrell Creek.*

The settlement in the neighborhood of Slate Rock Creek, or Burrell Creek, two and three-fourths miles southwest of White Springs, to which the survivors of the epidemic at Ganechstage moved in 1732, was called New Ganechstage. It appears to have been located on the so-called Reed farm in the southwestern part of Lot 32. While the name New Ganechstage implies that the village on Burrell Creek was a transplanting of Ganechstage from White Springs, yet there is something to suggest that some of their tribal brethren had already made their habitations there.

Contemporaneously with the migration of the people of Gannagaro from Boughton Hill to the White Springs, the people of the smaller eastern town of Gannogarae also moved eastward. It is not definitely known whether they also moved in a body to Ganechstage (White Springs) or some other place. It appears probable that a part of them, at least, settled in the neighborhood of Burrell Creek and that the fugitives from Ganechstage in 1732 fled, not to virgin fields, but to the cabins of their brethren. When visited in 1750 by the Moravian missionaries, New Ganechstage contained "only eight or nine huts," but the domestic long-house of the

Iroquois was often of great length, and it is probable that each of these houses contained several families. The leading citizen of New Ganechstage in 1750 was Gajinquehto or Sayenqueraghta, who is mentioned in the Moravian journal as being a chief who had a big house. Sayenqueraghta was of the Turtle Clan and afterward head chief or king of the Senecas at the new settlement village of Kanadesaga on Castle Brook.

New Ganechstage appears to have flourished for about twenty years or more—long enough for the formation of an extensive burial ground, where many relics of all kinds were found in after years.

Between 1750 and 1756, New Ganechstage was abandoned and a new settlement made about two miles north of White Springs on what was later called Castle Brook. This last settlement was called Kanadesaga and was the last capital of the Senecas. The cause of the removal of the village is not definitely known but may be surmised. The Iroquois village, built of bent saplings covered with bark, was not, like the substantial pueblos of the southwestern Indians, a permanent seat; and when the inhabitants had exhausted the fire wood supply within a convenient radius, or when the soil had become exhausted by repeated crops of corn without fertilization; or when their bark cabins became infested with vermin, it was easier for them to move to new pastures and build a new village than to cart their firewood and corn crops a longer distance. For this reason, the Iroquois villages frequently changed their sites, and it is not unlikely that such a motive led the people of New Ganechstage to the fertile fields north of Castle Brook.

The evidence that the removal to the latter site occurred between 1750 and 1756 is to be found in two facts: The first is that when Cammerhoff and Zeisberger visited the Seneca country in 1750, they made no mention of any village on Castle Brook, although they spoke of the abandoned site of Ganechstage and of the inhabited village of New Ganechstage. If such an important village as Kanadesaga had existed on Castle Brook at that time, the trail

leading thereto and the village itself could not have escaped the notice of the Moravian travelers. The fact which fixes 1756 as the second of the two dates between which the settlement was effected is established by the fact that the fortification or castle was erected there by Sir Wm. Johnson's men in that year.

*The Name Kanadesaga.*

The name Kanadesaga which signifies "new settlement village" appears in the printed records in a bewildering variety of forms. It is spelled:

Canadasaga	Cannadesago	Kanadasegea
Canada Saga	Cannadisago	Kanadasegey
Canadasagea	Cannisdque	Kanadasego
Canadasager	Cannisdagua	Kanadasegoa
Canadasaggo	Cannondesago	Kanadasegy
Canadasago	Canodasega	Kanadasero
Canadaseago	Canodosago	Kanadasigea
Canadasega	Canosedagui	Kanadesaga
Canadasege	Caundaisauque	Kanadesago
Canadasegea	Caundasaque	Kanadesego
Canadasego	Conadasaga	Kanadessegy
Canadayager	Conadasego	Kanadessigy
Canadasegy	Connadasaga	Kanadosago
Canadesaga	Connadasego	Kanadosega
Canadesago	Connadesago	Kanadosegea
Canadesego	Connagasago	Kanandasagea
Canadesequa	Conodosago	Kanasadagea
Canadisega	Cunnesedago	Kanasedaga
Canadosago	Ganadesaga	Kanedasaga
Canasadauque	Kanadagago	Kanesadaga
Canatasaga	Kanadaragea	Kanesadago
Canatasago	Kanadasaega	Kanesedaga
Canedesaga	Kanadasaga	Kannadasaga
Canesadage	Kanadasagea	Kannadaseago
Canesadago	Kanadasago	Kannadasega
Canesedaga	Kanadaseaga	Kannadesagea
Canidesego	Kanadaseagea	Kaunaudasage
Canidisego	Kanadaseago	Kennedaseage
Cannadaasago	Kanadaseegy	Kennesedaga
Cannadasago	Kanadasega	Konasadagea

Some authors believe that these are all variants of the name of the earlier village which the Moravians endeavored to express in the orthography Ganechstage and Ganechsatage.

The name Kanadesaga, in the various Iroquois dialects, is given by Lewis H. Morgan as follows:

Seneca: Ga-nun-da-sa'ga  
 Cayuga: Ga-na-da-sa'ga  
 Onondaga: Ga-na-da-sa'ga  
 Tuscarora: Ota-na-sa'ga  
 Oneida: Ga-na-da'sage  
 Mohawk: Ga-na-da-sage'

The variety of spelling is not to be wondered at when we take into consideration, in the first place, the fact that each of the Six Nations had a different dialect and each clan had dialectical differences; and in the second place, the fact that these different original pronunciations have been heard by ears attuned to four European languages — Dutch, English, German and French — and are interpreted in their diverse phonetic equivalents. Doubtless, also, some of the variations are due to the erroneous translation of obscure chirography into printer's types. Printed literature was comparatively rare in Colonial days, and the art of orthographic representation of Indian words had not the powerful auxiliary of frequent printing to give it stability.

Out of all these variations, most modern authors have adopted the spelling Kanadesaga, in which all of the "a's" have the broad sound as in "father." The principal accent is on the next to the last syllable. But for the fact that "Kanadesaga" has been so generally adopted by previous writers and already has its fixed place in literature, the present writer would, as a matter of propriety, prefer the Seneca form of "Ganundasaga," in agreement with the learned Dr. Morgan, who in 1880 wrote: "The Seneca Indians still call Geneva by the name of their own village of Ganundasaga near its site. It would be slightly different in the Mohawk dialect which differs but little from the Oneida. Kanadesaga is not probably the pure Mohawk form of the word, but as

near as the early settlers could pronounce it. Still, as it was a Seneca village, and the name is still used by them, I think it would have been better to follow them if it was considered important to have the exact name."

The name of an Indian town not only applied to the cluster of cabins located in a particular place, but also to the adjacent country. The isolated cabins of a single village sometimes extended over a territory of two or three miles. The name of Kanadesaga therefore was applied not only to the village, but also to the brook upon which it was located, to the territory between the village and the lake, to the lake and to the outlet of the lake.

### *The Building of Kanadesaga Castle.*

The numerous references in contemporary documents to the capital nature of Kanadesaga can leave no doubt as to the distinction which followed the people of Gannagaro to the intermediate sites of Ganechstage (White Springs) and New Ganechstage (Burrell Creek) until they collected on Castle Brook. The residence of Sayenqueraghta, the head sachem of the Senecas, at Kanadesga is a further indication of its dominant position in the nation; and the fact that Sir William Johnson selected this village as the place for the erection of a large stockade, or castle, is the concluding evidence of its political pre-eminence.

The building of a castle in the Seneca country had been recommended by Johnson as early as 1747 — before the migration to Castle Brook. At a meeting of a committee of the Governor's Council in New York city, October 3, 1747, Col. Johnson expressed the opinion that the Indians would be greatly encouraged at that time if two forts were erected speedily, one in the Senecas' country and one in the Oneidas'. This recommendation was not acted upon, however, until after Kanadesaga had been settled on its final site.

At a Congress of commissioners of the provinces of New York, New Haven, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsyl-

vania and Maryland, held at Albany, June 19, 1754, the project was revived during the consideration of the subject of securing the Six Nations to the British interests. The Indian situation at that time was far from satisfactory to the British. The Indians were much scattered, and the provincial authorities felt the need of causing them to dwell together in their castles for the strength that it would give them. Furthermore, they felt the need of counteracting the zealous labors of the French missionaries to win the Iroquois away from their allegiance to the British government. In 1749, Abbe Picquet had established a successful Iroquois colony at Swegache, on the site of Ogdensburg, on the St. Lawrence river, and this had drawn from the Six Nations, more particularly the Onondagas, so rapidly that in 1754, at the time of the Albany Congress, the inhabitants of their three villages near Swegache were estimated by the French to number no less than 3,000. This was a serious depletion of the Indian population belonging properly to the British jurisdiction. Furthermore, the French were now making an earnest effort to prevail on the Senecas, who were accounted the most numerous nation, to come and settle at Irondequoit in order to have them nearer to the French settlements and thus subject them the more easily to French influence; and the Senecas were wavering. The Indian Commissioners therefore recommended to Lieutenant-Governor De Lancey that he should insist that the Senecas, who were then living very remote from one another, should make a general castle near the Seneca river where they had already begun to build a new castle.

On September 12, 1754, the Commissioners of Indian Affairs wrote to Governor De Lancey with a view to hiring Myndert Wemp to go with Mr. Wendle, John Rensselaer's nephew, to the Senecas' country, remarking that "he will go if he can take one of his sons who speaks Indian and do smith's work. No carpenter will undertake to build the fort on the credit of the Government." Such an arrangement was made with Wemp, eventually, but not until after a long delay. Meanwhile, on July 21, 1755, Sir William

Johnson renewed to the Lords of Trade the recommendation that forts be built in the Indian country, to be properly garrisoned, provided with gunsmiths and armorers, and that a trading place be established in or near the forts where the Indians could obtain all necessary commodities. He deprecated, however, the sale of intoxicating liquors.

While making these recommendations to the various authorities, Johnson, with his extraordinary influence, brought the Senecas into such a frame of mind that they themselves desired the building of a fort. On March 7, 1756, a meeting of Seneca sachems was held at Fort Johnson on their way home from a council at Albany. Sir William's Journal says:

"T a g i g h s a d y, the greatest sachem of their nation, rose up and spoke: Brother W a r r a g h i y a g e y: We hope you will, as soon as the season admits of it, send good men to build the fort for us, for we are in a very bad situation at present, having such bad neighbors as the French near us."

To this Sir William replied: "You may depend upon my sending men to build a fort for your protection as soon as possible."

Whereupon the Seneca sachem replied: "We return you thanks for the assurance you give us of sending up workmen to build a fort for our protection."

In a letter dated the next day, March 8, 1756, Sir William wrote to the Lords of Trade: "The chiefs of the Seneca Nation desired that they might have a fort built in their country which I promised them, well knowing it will be the means of keeping out French emissaries from among them and settling their former wavering disposition."

Sir William could not at once send the necessary party to build the fort, but he sent Myndert Wemp and his son ahead to remain with the Senecas and, as it were, pre-empt the ground from the French. On March 26, 1756, he wrote to Wemp advising him to remain there until the end of May or the first of June, or until the corn was a foot high, and to do all the work for the Indians

that they wanted. Above all, he was to suffer no French emissaries to come among the Indians "as it might greatly hurt His Majesty's interest with that nation to have such come among them."

Unfortunately, the Indians were suffering from a scarcity of corn, and for that reason, Wemp and his son had to leave them and on April 29 returned to Fort Johnson. Meanwhile Sir William sent them two boatloads of corn to relieve their distress.

Wemp reported to Sir William that the Senecas were greatly pleased with his promise to build a fort for them and hoped that he would do so speedily. They also desired that when the fort was built, some of Wemp's sons would reside there, as they understood the Seneca language and were smiths.

The building of the fort was not much longer delayed. On April 21, Sir William sent a party to the Oneidas to build a fort there; on April 30 to the Onondagas; and under date of Fort Johnson, May 28, 1756, he announced that a fort was building in the Senecas' country as well as at the other two places.

While we have not the plans and specifications according to which the castle of Kanadesaga was built, we are able to arrive at its plan from the physical remains which were traceable years ago, and can gain an idea of its details from the specifications on record concerning other Indian forts.

The Onondaga fort was a stockade 100 feet square. The stockades were fifteen feet long, which sunk into the ground to a depth of three feet and were well pounded and rammed. The touching sides of the stockades were squared so as to fit together closely. Loopholes were made four feet apart. The fort had two blockhouses, the first story twenty feet square and the second story projecting one and one-half feet over the beams, with a good sentry box on top of each. The fort had a good gate of 3-inch oak plank with iron hinges, and a small gate of oak plank of the same thickness.

The Oneida fort differed from the Onondaga fort in proportions. It was 120 feet square and the palisadoes 16 feet long, set four feet in the ground. It had two blockhouses, 24 feet square.

Judging from the size of the Kanadesaga castle, as compared with the other Indian forts, and from the size of the parties sent to build the latter, we may infer that Sir William sent a detachment of about thirty men and about four pairs of horses to draw the logs, to build the Seneca stockade.

The work was completed about the 1st of August, 1756, and the workmen were safely escorted home by Seneca warriors from another village named Ganuskago, which stood upon the site of the present Dansville, in Livingston county. On August 5, 1756, Kindaruntie, a chief man of Ganuskago, arrived at Fort Johnson and told Sir William that at the request of his Kanadesaga brethren his village had furnished the escort and he thanked the white father for sending such good men.

Sir William replied: "I approve much of your Sachem's prudence and care of their brethren in sending some of their warriors to guard them home, and more particularly for making so good a choice as of you and your party. I hope that the fort is made to their liking and that it may be a security to you all, your wives and children against any designs or attempts of your and our common enemy, the French, which was the only view in building it."

Kindaruntie replied that it was to their liking and he did not doubt but it would be the means of preserving the lives of their old men, women and children, which assurance gave them great pleasure.

Sir William Johnson intended to have a captain's company stationed there and equip the stockade with two or three small field pieces. But no sooner was the fort built, than the Indians sent a delegation, with full powers from their nation, to inform Sir William that he need not be at the trouble of sending any of his troops there; that they were abundantly sufficient to man it themselves — "a very decent way of forbidding him sending his troops," says the Rev. Mr. Kirtland.\*

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\* Here, as in the following pages, we have spelled Mr. Kirtland's name as it appears in his signed letters, although in a great deal of literature it is spelled Kirkland.

*Village Life in Kanadesaga.*

From fragments of information gathered from the writings of travelers and captives, official documents and archaeological traces of the ruins of Kanadesaga, we are able to bring back to our mind's eye with reasonable clearness a picture of the Seneca capital in its principal outlines.

The fortification of Kanadesaga was a stockade, approximately rectangular in shape, and about twice as long north and south as it was wide. Its north wall was about  $102\frac{1}{2}$  feet\* long; its east wall 180 feet; its south wall 105 feet; and its west wall  $207\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

Its north wall was 550 feet south of the Old Castle road or North street. Its northeast corner was about ninety feet from the Old Pre-emption road and its southeast corner about seventy feet. The walls were about twelve feet high, made of the trunks of trees set up vertically in the ground and perforated at intervals of four feet with loopholes for rifles. At the northern end of the west wall there was a bastion-like projection, about ten feet square, flanking that wall, and a similar construction at the southern end of the east wall, commanding that side. The stockade had at least one blockhouse—for the missionary, Kirtland, lived in it—and one of Sullivan's soldiers in 1779 heard of two or three. There were probably two, one on the northwest corner and one on the southeast corner.

The ground on which the fort was built sloped toward the south, and close by the southwest corner ran Kanadesaga or Castle Brook. In the south wall, near the southwest corner, was the principal gate-

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\* These figures are based on dimensions given in paces of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet each in a plan made by Lewis H. Morgan in 1845, and must be regarded as approximate. In the Smithsonian Institution's "Contributions to Knowledge" (1851), E. G. Squier gives a plan on which he indicates only the length of the east side, which he makes 198 feet, or 10 per cent. longer than Morgan makes it. If this ratio of difference holds with the other dimensions, they would be as follows: North wall,  $112\frac{3}{4}$  feet; west wall,  $228\frac{1}{4}$  feet, and south wall,  $115\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

way, giving ready access to the brook.\* Within the stockade were a few buildings. In the northeast and northwest corners of the enclosure were stone chimneys — one probably used as a forge and the other as an oven.

Surrounding the stockade was the village, almost circular in form, about 100 rods in diameter, and laid out with some degree of regularity. It consisted of seventy or eighty houses, generally built of saplings covered with bark after the Indian fashion. A few houses were of hewn logs and some of round logs. Chief among these buildings in size and importance, was the Council House, which was also used on occasions as a chapel.

Close by the village on the west was an extensive apple orchard, and about half a mile north of the town was a large peach orchard. Wild plums, mulberries, hickory nuts, walnuts and butternuts also grew in abundance. In and near the village were great plantations of corn, the staple of Indian diet. Intermingled with the corn and growing in separate patches were beans, peas, squashes, onions, turnips, cabbages, cucumbers, watermelons, carrots and parsnips. To these luxuries of the vegetable kingdom, most of which had been introduced by the white men, were added two from the animal kingdom — a few horses and cattle. In the adjacent forests, bear, deer, and other wild animals abounded and in season contributed to the subsistence of the villagers; while the lake yielded fish in abundance.

Here, for about a quarter of a century, Kanadesaga, with its population of nearly 1,000† inhabitants bustled with life and activity. Here the natives cultivated and harvested their fields,

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\* This water-course is now dry most of the time. The precise location of the fort is shown on the accompanying map, embodying the results of a survey made expressly for the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

† Taking the largest number of houses mentioned in the records, and assuming that they were all single houses with the capacity of eight persons, the population would have been about 640. But usually the houses were longer and contained more than one fire; and it seems probable that in its most flourishing state Kanadesaga contained nearly 1,000 persons.

and pounded their corn into meal for bread. Hence they went with bow and stone-tipped arrow into the forest or with spear to the lake side, and hither they returned with bear or deer on their shoulders or fish in their hands. Here gathered the clans in council when affairs of national importance were to be considered. From this point they went forth on the warpath, perhaps to the distant regions of the west, perhaps to the border settlements of the east, and back to this capital they came, with scalps, captives and plunder. Here they had their rejoicings and sorrowings and here they buried their dead, whose bones still rest in the soil of Kanadesaga.

While, in the history of their relations with the white men during this quarter century, there is much to shock, there is also much to enlist sympathy. If they had had to deal only with the colonists of New York State their record would have been very different; but involved as a third party first in the war between Great Britain and France, and later in the war between Great Britain and the United States, it is not to be wondered at that they were persuaded by evil counsels to commit some of the atrocities to which their untamed natures too readily predisposed them.

### *The French and Indian War.*

The policy of the English in erecting a fort at Kanadesaga appears to have been successful in securing at least the eastern Seneca villages to the English interests during the French and Indian war. At the close of the war, at a meeting of Indians held at Johnson Hall on September 9, 1763, Sir William Johnson was assured of the friendliness of the eastern Seneca villages and September 14, he wrote to Sir Jeffrey Amherst:

“The Seneca villages called Kanadessegy and Canadasaggo are said to be in our interest, for which reason the Indians appear very desirous that they might be continued amongst the number of our friends, as they have not committed hostilities and that they had given assurance to the Indians of these villages that they

would endeavor to make their peace with the English, which prevented our acting against them."

Amherst replied from New York on September 30 that he was glad to treat the "two castles Kanadasegy and Canadaraggo" as friends, and ordered that in any operation that might be carried on against the Senecas the Indians of these two castles were not to be molested.

On November 13, 1763, Sir William wrote to the Lords of Trade in England that of the Six Nations, all but the Senecas remained friendly, and that of the Senecas, two villages, namely, "Kanadasegy and Kanadaraygo" were friendly, and in his enumeration of the Indians November 18, he remarked that of the Senecas, two villages were still in their interest, viz., "Kanadasero and Kanadaragey," the rest having joined the western nations.

In the foregoing allusions, we can recognize in the variegated spelling the names of the two villages of Canandaigua and Kanadesaga.

On April 3, 1764, preliminary articles of peace were concluded with the Seneca Indians at Johnson Hall, and were signed by Sir William Johnson and eight sachems. The latter, of course, could not write. Their names were therefore plainly written, apparently in Sir William's handwriting, and to each name respectively the sachems affixed their totem signs. Among the eight sachems attesting the articles was Sayenqueraghta of Kanadesaga, to whose name is affixed the sign of the turtle. Sayenqueraghta had just succeeded to the headship of the Senecas upon the death of Sagech-sadon.

*The Rev. Samuel Kirtland's Life at Kanadesaga.*

The French missionaries having now been effectually driven away from the Iroquois, considerations of both Christianity and political policy dictated that their place should be promptly supplied by English missionaries. When, therefore, in 1764, the Rev.

Samuel Kirtland,\* eager to learn the native language of the Iroquois so as to facilitate his religious work among them and to enable him to teach their boys, proposed to take up his residence among them, he was cordially encouraged by Sir William Johnson. In October of that year, the Rev. Dr. Eleazar Wheelock, who had an Indian school at Lebanon, Conn., gave Mr. Kirtland a letter of introduction to Sir William Johnson, and he set out for Fort Johnson, accompanied by an educated Delaware Indian named Joseph Woolley. The letter stated that the bearers desired to learn the Seneca and Mohawk languages and teach among those nations; also, if possible, to procure a number of Indian youths for the school at Lebanon.

Presenting himself at Johnson Hall, Mr. Kirtland was received with much courtesy by the great and influential Indian agent. On January 17, 1765, he departed for the west, accompanied by two Indian guides who bore a message from Sir William commending him to the friendly consideration of the Senecas at Kanadesaga. On February 7, they arrived at Kanadesaga, which Mr. Kirtland called "their principal town this side of Genesee." According to Indian custom, his journal continues, "we halted at the skirts of the town, sat down on a log to rest and lighted our pipes. Presently a runner was dispatched from the town and came in full speed to us and asked whence we came and where we were going and what was our desire. One of the convoy answered, we were only bound to this place and wished to be conducted to the house of the chief sachem. He then told us to follow him and we soon entered the chief sachem's house and were cordially received."

His host was Sayenqueraghta. That night, Mr. Kirtland slept in a bunk on one side of the room in the sachem's house.

The next day, the sachems and head warriors were assembled in the Council House, where Mr. Kirtland delivered Sir William

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\* A sketch of Mr. Kirtland's life by his grandson, the Rev. S. K. Lathrop, will be found in Sparks' American Biography, 2d series, XV. As stated on a previous page, although Mr. Kirtland's name is frequently spelled "Kirtland," we have adhered to the form in which it appears signed to his letters.

Johnson's message accompanied by a wampum belt. The message was received with great applause, except by a small minority. Sayenqueraghta made a "very handsome and animated reply" and then handed the wampum belt to the chief who sat next to him. Thus the belt was passed around the whole circle. "Some," says Mr. Kirtland, "would strike it up and down with the hand and perhaps make some remarks; others would look upon it apparently with an intenseness of thought and not open their lips, and then pass it to the next." The missionary, new to Indian customs, perhaps did not realize the importance of this belt ceremony which lasted twenty minutes by his watch. The men who gazed at it so steadfastly were probably memorizing its appearance, as belts of this sort were mnemonic tokens of official transactions and were often produced as evidence of them.

Mr. Kirtland was adopted into the sachem's family and proclaimed to be a brother to all the other inhabitants. He was then quartered with one of the families of the village. On the fourth night of his residence with this family the head of the family died suddenly. This caused great excitement, not only in Kanadesaga but also in the neighboring villages to which runners were immediately sent, and many of the Indians regarded the white man with suspicion as the cause.

Three days later the funeral was held in the Council House. The house was crowded with men. The body was neatly dressed in a clean white shirt, a black shroud blanket, scarlet leggings, new mocassins and was curiously painted, and laid in a coffin. The dead man's pipe, tomahawk, tobacco pouch, flint, steel and punk, were placed on both sides of his head in the coffin. From the Council House, the remains were followed to the grave by about 150 women and girls, but by no men except the bearers, the grave digger and Mr. Kirtland. When they left the Council House, some sang a mournful song and marched to its rhythm; while others "screamed and yelled like dogs."

After the funeral a long council was held by the Indians to

deliberate on Mr. Kirtland's fate. During this period he was conducted into the woods under pretense of shooting partridges and kept secluded in a sugar hut for two or three days. During this time, his Indian sister secretly brought him food. In the council, a chief of some prominence known as Captain Onogwadekha manifested bitter enmity against the missionary and made an inflammatory speech, demanding his death. After a good deal of discussion, in which many chiefs took part, the widow was summoned and spoke well of the white man, testifying that she found no magic powders among his effects. Then the head sachem made the closing speech, saying:

"Bury the hatchet deep in the ground with all jealousy and animosity against our white brother."

This speech silenced all further opposition and all but fifteen present assented to his advice. The head sachem then said:

"Our business is done. I rake up the council fire."

Whereupon the council broke up with a general shout of applause.

Mr. Kirtland now returned to the village and was received with joy, being told that "all is now only peace." He then took up his residence in one of the blockhouses of the great fortified enclosure, with the family of his "elder brother" Tekanada.

Among Mr. Kirtland's acquaintances in Kanadesaga was a Delaware Indian named Squash Cutter, who was harbored there for some months, "being afraid to return to his nation, lest some of their chiefs, who are great friends to the white people, should seize him and carry him a prisoner to Sir William." What Squash Cutter had done to make him thus afraid is not disclosed. Mr. Kirtland says: "Upon my first acquaintance with him he appeared to be jealous of me. After some time he became quite familiar and was very fond of conversing with me."

### *The Starving Time at Kanadesaga.*

The ensuing season was one of great distress in Kanadesaga, partly on account of the failure of the corn crop, partly on account

of scarcity of game, and partly because after a general meeting of the Senecas the Indians residing above Kanadesaga had been living so much on the village that the food supply was very low. Mr. Kirtland was reduced to such straits that white acorns fried in bear's grease were all he had to eat for several days. This diet gave him violent colic, which was not relieved until his "grand-mother"—the head sachem's mother—aged ninety years, gave him three gills of refined bear's grease.

The danger of starvation became so imminent that Mr. Kirtland, Tekanada and the latter's family started in a canoe in the latter part of April, 1765, for Johnson Hall. On Oneida lake, they were overtaken by a hurricane, their canoe sprang a leak, and they could progress only with great difficulty. Tekanada, pale with fright, opened a squirrel skin pouch, took out some kind of powder\* and cast two pinches of it on the water, crying out, as Mr. Kirtland interpreted it: "Now, wind, do your best. Do your best, I say!"

The storm continued, however, and Tekanada besought Mr. Kirtland to pray to his God, which Mr. Kirtland did. Finally they reached the shore in safety, but as soon as their canoe touched the beach, it fell to pieces. Eventually they reached Johnson Hall. During their brief stay here, Tekanada's wife died, partly on account of her recent lack of nourishment and partly from exposure on the trip.

Unknown to Mr. Kirtland and to Sayenqueraghta, some of the Indians at Kanadesaga had sent a petition, accompanied by two

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\* It is probable that this sacred powder was tobacco. In "A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia," by "Thomas Heriot, servant to Sir Walter Raleigh," it is stated that tobacco was of such precious estimation among the Indians "that they thinke their gods are marvellously delighted therewith: Whereupon sometime they make hallowed fires and cast some of the poudre therein for a sacrifice: *being in a storme upon the waters, to pacifie their gods, they cast some up into the aire and into the water: so a weare for fish being newly set up, they cast some therein and into the aire: also after an escape of danger they cast some into the aire likewise.*" At Niagara Falls, it was the custom of passing Indians to throw tobacco into the water as a sacrifice to the Manitou of the Falls.

belts of wampum, to Sir William, begging for provisions for the women and children. Sir William listened to the appeal, and in May, sent Mr. Kirtland back to Kanadesaga with a boat load of provisions. Mr. Kirtland arrived at the castle on May 30, 1765, after a very fatiguing journey. His reception, however, was not at first very cordial, probably partly on account of the scarcity of food. Writing from Kanadesaga under date of June 17 to Sir William Johnson, he says:

“I’ve answered ye two belts by which they demanded Provisions for ye Women & Children, Trade, &c they have made no return. I apprehend (they) are a little guilty & asham’d of ye mean part they acted. The Sachem knew nothing of sending yt large belt for Provisions &c was surprised to hear of their unreasonable demands. The Sachem and others do really appear friendly. In general they treat me with no more respect than they would show to a dog — but this is equal to me. I believe a little more Provision than I’m like to get here will be necessary for my subsistence this summer. The Indians from above living so much upon this Town since ye general meeting has created a great scarcity of Provisions. I suppose there is not 3 bushels of indian Corn in ye Castle. When I went from hence last spring they were well stored. Could I have a plenty of fresh venison & bear’s flesh I would do without bread, ye staff of Life, but to have little of either & ye most of yt little rotten, I think may be called coarse fare.

It was said in ye ancient puritannick times, yt man should not live by bread alone — The modern ages, it seems, have degenerated, especially in these parts, for we are like to be denied any bread at all.

I design (god willing) to be down about twenty days from hence. I’ve wrote desiring Capt. Butler to make ready Provision for me against my arrival, your Excellency approving ye same. I don’t doubt but Revd. Mr. Wheelock would think it expedient. It will be to ye credit of ye Design, as well as my comfort & support. Tho’ success in my present undertaking be uncertain, I must make a trial for 3 or 4 years, yt I may answer with a clear Conscience before Almighty God. My obligations from without are considerable, but much greater from within. I submit it wholly to your Excellency, whose direction and advice I esteem

infinitely preferable to my own; also for whose unreserved kindness and condesention I desire to renew most humble thanks.

That Success & Prosperity may crown all your Excellency's undertakings is ye sincere wish of him who is with greatest esteem,

Your Excellency's most obedient & obliged humble servant  
S. KIRTLAND.

P. S. I shall go down by water with one or two Indians who have invited me to go with them for sake of learning ye language.

I have not, nor shall I acquaint them yt I have any thoughts of getting provision up here."

Mr. Kirtland's special friend and main support at Kanadesaga was Tekanada. In a letter to Sir William Johnson dated Feb. 18, 1766, Mr. Kirtland quotes Tekanada's request for permission to accompany his braves on a war expedition against the Cherokees. Following is the substance of Tekanada's message to Sir William as written by Mr. Kirtland:

"I return you many thanks for your friendly encouraging words last fall — they buried almost all my sorrow & gave me as it were new life. I keep you continually in my mind. I again return most hearty thanks for your Remembrance of me. I desire you wou'd consider ye present disposition & intention of my warriors to visit ye old Enemies ye Cherokee. You are well acquainted with our Ancient Customs & Traditions, yt ye late breach in my family cant be fully made up in any other way.\* I know not wt. your present stores are, nor how you are disposed toward these things. I ask only this yt you would take it into consideration. You are doubtless sensible it is hard for me to see all my Notes (?) pass me on this Business, & I being alone perhaps shall set down & weep with my miserable Condition. But if my Warreours go I'll be contented to tarry. Your encouraging word & strict charge last fall shall support me & be continually in my mind."

The record does not show whether Tekanada was permitted to go on the war path with his brethren and thus secure a new wife

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\* This is evidently an allusion to the recent death of Tekanada's wife, and to the custom which prevailed among the Iroquois, from the foundation of the Confederacy, to fill a family vacancy caused by death by the adoption of a captive.

by the ancient custom of capture, or whether he assuaged his grief with the charms of some Seneca belle of Kanadesaga. In any event, his name may well be preserved as a friendly Indian who helped Mr. Kirtland in his civilizing work.

The primitive conditions at Kanadesaga and the difficulty of reckoning dates are indicated by the manner in which Mr. Kirtland dated the letter from which the foregoing extract about Tekanada is taken. He dates it "Kaunaudasage Feby 18, 1766, if I dont mistake," and then adds the following significant postscript: "I beg ye favour of an Almanack if your Honor has a supply. I fear I shall forget ye Sabbaths & perhaps new moons, & become a Savage indeed."

In the spring of 1766, Mr. Kirtland returned east with his faithful friend Tekanada, arriving at Lebanon, Conn., on the 19th of May. When passing through Hartford they were received by the General Assembly, then in session; and Tekanada, with Mr. Kirtland as interpreter, made a reply which excited the admiration of the entire body.

### *Kanadesaga in the American Revolution.*

Upon the outbreak of the American Revolution, the people of Kanadesaga, as indeed all of the Iroquois Indians, found themselves in a predicament. For over a century they had recognized the British government and its Colonial representatives as their allies against the French. Now, they were called upon to take sides in a war between two branches of their white allies. It was difficult enough for many white men, with their more advanced civilization, their more highly developed consciences and their better knowledge of the principles involved, to decide which side to take; it was more difficult for the comparatively untutored red-man. Early in the struggle, Washington took measures to secure the friendship of the Iroquois to the American cause, and succeeded in gaining over the Tuscaroras and Oneidas; but it is not surprising that the Senecas, who so long had been under the

influence of Sir William Johnson and the direct official representatives of the British government, and who were geographically located so near to the important British base of operations at Fort Niagara, sympathized with the British cause.

Further to strengthen their hold on the Senecas, the British, with shrewd foresight, early in the war erected a few buildings between Kanadesaga and the outlet of the lake, which came to be known as Butler's Buildings, from the fact that they were frequently the headquarters of Col. John Butler, commander of Butler's Rangers. These buildings, only two or three in number, one of them quite large, were near the northwest corner of Seneca lake near the original outlet.\* Butler's Buildings were erected as a residence for Col. John and Capt. Walter Butler and as barracks for their soldiers when in that country. It was a rallying place for the Rangers and Indians when assembling for a raid on the frontiers. It was also a depot for supplies, the Indian corn fields of Kanadesaga furnishing large quantities of subsistence for the British armies.

In 1778, from Kanadesaga as a base, the British and their Indian allies set out to perpetrate two of the most famous — or, rather, infamous — massacres in the history of the war, namely, those at Wyoming, Pa., July 1-4, and Cherry Valley, N. Y., November 11.

The expedition to Wyoming, which rendezvoused at Kanadesaga, was commanded by Col. John Butler and consisted of a detachment of Sir John Johnson's Royal Greens and Butler's Rangers numbering about 300, and 500 Indians. The latter were chiefly

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\* Benjamin Lodge, the surveyor who accompanied Gen. Sullivan on his march into the Seneca country in 1779, surveyed the entire route. His original maps, known as the DeWitt-Erskine maps, are in the archives of the New York Historical Society. Erskine was the geographer under whose direction the survey was made. Upon his death he was succeeded by Simeon DeWitt. Map "No. 96 E — to the outlet of Seneca Lake," has the route laid down at the foot of the lake, and at a point noted at the northwest corner of the lake is marked "Tory Butler's Quarters."

Senecas, with a few Mohawks and a band of Onondagas. One of Butler's Rangers, Lieut. Adam Crysler, kept a diary, in which he says:

"In May, 1778, I received Col. Butler's orders to come to Canatasaga. Accordingly I did and brought 19 men with me (who are with Col. Butler at present) at which time he made me a Lieutenant; and from there I went under command of Col. Butler to Wayomen where we had an engagement and killed about 460 of the enemy, and from thence we went to Aughquagy."\*

The summer of 1778 was one of great excitement among the Indians at Kanadesaga. The noted Seneca Chief Big Tree had made a visit to Washington and to him had professed great friendship for the American cause. After promising the American commander-in-chief his aid and assistance, he started for home, and in passing through the country of the friendly Oneidas expressed great confidence in his ability to influence his people to unite with the Americans. He told the Oneidas that if he could not induce all of his people to that course, he would return to the Oneidas with as many adherents as he could bring. The Oneidas, not hearing from Big Tree as soon as they expected, despatched an emissary to Kanadesaga to find out what was the matter. Arriving in the Seneca country, he found the Senecas all in arms, and the two villages "Kanadaseago and Jennessee" crowded with warriors from the remotest settlements.

The trouble was, that during the slow negotiations with the Senecas, the Americans, aroused by the depredations on the frontiers, had begun to consider the advisability of invading the Seneca country and chastising the Indians for their bloody work. Rumors of these plans having reached the Senecas after Big Tree's return, their friendship for the Americans (if they really had any after such close neighborhood with Butler's men) was

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\* Oquago, or Oghquago (now Windsor, Broome county, N. Y.), a favorite seat of the Oneidas.

turned to resentment, and Big Tree and his warriors flew to arms to resist the enemy that dared to penetrate their country.

The plan for securing the friendship of the Senecas thus miscarried, and under the malignant influence of the Butlers, new deviltry was soon hatched among them. On October 23, 1778, about 500 of them started out from Kanadesaga and joined the forces under Capt. Walter Butler and the Indian chief Brant in their raid on Cherry Valley November 11. The leader of the Senecas was Sayenqueraghta of Kanadesaga. Lieut. Crysler of Butler's Rangers, who had been engaged in some marauding expeditions in Otsego county and at German Flats during the autumn, was with Butler's forces, returning with them to Niagara in December. Their line of retreat brought them from Elmira up the eastern side of Seneca lake, and around the foot of the lake to Kanadesaga, where they arrived about the last of November. Here, all the captive children and infants were separated from their parents and given into different Indian families for adoption. Here the wife of Col. Samuel Campbell was left in captivity. Her children were taken away from her and she, according to the Indian custom before mentioned, was given to a family to fill a vacancy caused by the death of one of its members.

In the spring of 1779 Col. Butler came to Kanadesaga to confer with the Indians about exchanging the prisoners they held for Mrs. Butler\* and her family who were held within the American lines. The Indians held a council lasting several days, at the conclusion of which they yielded to Butler's earnest persuasions. Mrs. Campbell was thereupon sent to Niagara, arriving in June.

In the spring of 1779 Lieut. Crysler went to Kanadesaga again under command of the Tory Col. Butler, and from that point participated in forays upon the frontier settlements. One of these expeditions consisted of 100 rangers and 200 Seneca Indians under command of Capt. McDonald, which attacked Freeland's Fort on

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\* His mother, or wife. The record is not clear which.

the west branch of the Susquehanna river in July. According to Crysler's account, they killed forty men and took thirty prisoners. With the latter, the British and Indians returned to Col. Butler at Kanadesaga. Leaving their captives at the Seneca capital, the combined force marched south to Chemung; but here they encountered Sullivan's army of retribution and here the tide of fortune turned.

*The Annihilation of Kanadesaga.*

The barbarities of the British with their Indian allies led Congress to authorize Washington to send an army into the Iroquois country, with a view to reducing their numbers, destroying their resources, and exterminating the Tory nest at Fort Niagara which was the chief base of their operations. Having failed to win the Indians by friendly overtures early in the war, it was planned to bring upon them such a terrible retribution as should put it beyond their power further to harm the frontier towns. The expedition was planned in two divisions—one under Gen. James Clinton and the other under Gen. John Sullivan. Sullivan's headquarters were at Easton, Penn. Thence he started on his famous march, sometimes called Sullivan's Raid, June 18, 1779. He was joined at Tioga, N. Y., on August 22d by Clinton, who, in the meantime, had invaded the Onondaga country and laid waste the villages near Onondaga lake. Leaving Tioga August 26, they arrived at Newtown (Elmira) where, on Sunday, August 29, they met and defeated a formidable force of British regulars and Indians under the command of Col. John Butler, Capt. Walter Butler, Capt. McDonald, and the Indian chief Brant.

On August 30, the army remained on the ground, destroying the Indian corn and on the 31st resumed the march northward, along the east shore of Seneca lake. On Monday, September 6, they camped between Appletown and the foot of the lake.

At 8 o'clock on the morning of the 7th, the army struck its tents and reached the foot of the lake about 2 p. m. Here, apprehending some opposition, a halt was made for a reconnoissance, but no

enemy was found. The march was then resumed, the army keeping close to the lake on account of a marsh on their right. Coming to the outlet,\* they forded it, the water reaching from their knees to their waists and the river being from twenty to thirty yards wide.

The crossing of the outlet by Sullivan's army of 2,500 or 3,000 soldiers, with their packhorses loaded with camp impediments and supplies, with their droves of cattle and with their five pieces of artillery — four brass three-pounders and one small howitzer — presented a picturesque scene worthy of an artist's canvas. A short distance from the outlet near the northwestern extremity of the lake, they came to Butler's buildings, but found them deserted. After destroying these structures and the adjacent corn field, the army proceeded to Kanadesaga Castle, where they arrived about dusk. They found the town completely deserted by the Indians, who had evidently left not more than a day or two before, for the soldiers found in the village a little white boy, about four years old, entirely naked and almost starved, but still alive.†

Arrived at the village, some of the soldiers busied themselves with unpacking the horses and tethering them; others with corraling the cattle; others with erecting their tents for the night; and the artillerymen with planting their five cannon at eligible points for the protection of the camp. Meanwhile, some of the fragile cabins of the natives were pulled down for firewood, and soon the campfires were glowing in the gathering gloom and the camp-kettles were boiling with the evening meal.

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\* The original outlet was about half a mile west of the present outlet of Seneca Lake. The latter was made at an early day by the Seneca Lock Navigation Co.

† This child, belonging to some unfortunate captive, was adopted by Capt. Machin, of the artillery, given the name of Thomas Machin, and tenderly cared for. Upon the return of the army, the boy was placed with a family in Kingston, N. Y., where he died of small-pox about two years later. His parents were never found.

Lieut. Beatty records: "This town is the chief town\* of the Seneca nation. It lies about one and one-half miles from the lake \* \* \* on a pretty level spot, but no good stream of water near it — only one small brook running through it which affords but very little water. There is about seventy or eighty houses in it and built very compact and the chief of the houses very good. Likewise I heard there was two or three old blockhouses but I did not see them as it was dark when we came in."

When morning dawned on the 8th and the men obtained their first clear view of the place, they found the deserted village centering around a large green plot on which the stockade had been built in 1756, but the fortification itself was practically in ruins. In the houses they found bear skins, deer skins, Indian trinkets, and quantities of corn and vegetables. Several horses and cows were discovered and captured. During the day, the main army devoted itself to demolishing the buildings, girdling the trees in the orchards, cutting and burning the standing corn, destroying the vegetables, and devastating the village generally; while two detachments under Major Poor and Col. John Harper made side excursions to neighboring Indian settlements on a like mission.

After the day's work was done, the men cleaned their pieces and made ready for the next day's march; but whether they should march to the westward or eastward was a question with Gen. Sullivan. He was very anxious to reach Fort Niagara and extirpate that Tory plague spot; but a shortage of supplies counseled discretion. His supply of flour was reduced on account of the failure of his pack horses and his supply of beef was short on account of the loss of several head of cattle in the creeks and ravines across and through which they had marched. For a long time the men had had meat only twice in three days and bread only once in four days, their subsistence having been almost entirely on corn and

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\* Lieut.-Col. Henry Dearborn says that it is "a large town called Kannad-sega, which is considered as the capital of the Senecas and is called Seneca Castle." These and numerous other like references to Kanadesaga leave no doubt of its capital importance.

beans secured in the Indian country. After conferring with his officers, however, he determined to push on as far as Genesee, which he regarded as the key to the Indian country. He therefore sent the sick and lame back to Tioga and gave orders to march for Genesee the next morning.

That night it rained, delaying the start on the 9th; but about noon on the latter date, after having destroyed every edible which the men, horses and cattle could not eat, the army resumed its march westward and proceeded as far west as Genesee Castle, which was located on the west side of the Genesee river near Cuylerville, Livingston county. Here they arrived September 14. After destroying the town and crops, the army began its counter-march on the 15th. At sunset on Sunday, the 19th, they arrived again at Kanadesaga and pitched their tents. On Monday, the 20th, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, they struck their tents and an hour later marched off, crossed the outlet, and at sunset camped near the lake.

"Previous to our march from Canadasago," says Lieut. Hardenbergh, under date of Monday, "Col. Butler of the 4th Pennsylvania Regiment was sent with a detachment to the Kiyuga lake to destroy some Indian settlements that were there," and "Col. Gansevort (was) sent with 100 men to Fort Stanwix (Rome) in order to send down some baggage which was left on the Mohawk river by troops that had been stationed there the preceding year."

Sullivan's terrible expedition into the Iroquois country had its expected effect. The misery and demoralization of the Indians was complete; the power of the Iroquois Confederacy was broken; and the western door of the Long House was rent from its fastenings.

After this tragic event, a few Indians returned to Kanadesaga, just enough to keep it in existence in history for several years more; but no concerted effort was made to rebuild the village. In the course of time, sprouts from the old apple trees grew up and bore fruit, and a few of their descendants still give evidence of the

ancestral orchards which flourished in the palmy days of Kanadesaga.

In its diminished state, Kanadesaga continued to be a landmark during the remaining years of the war. On May 14, 1780, a party of Indians arrived here with prisoners captured at Weisport, Pa., April 25. These captives included Benjamin Gilbert, Sr., his wife Elizabeth, their son Jesse; Jesse's son Abner and daughters Rebecca and Elizabeth; Abigail Dodson, aged 14; Benjamin Peart, his wife Elizabeth and their infant. Here the Indians painted Benjamin Gilbert, Sr., black, which caused the captives much alarm as they believed that he was to be killed. While staying at this place they were visited by a British soldier and another white man, en route to Niagara and Montreal. In the course of time, the captives were taken on to Niagara, where they found four of their relatives who had been taken there by another route.

During the next four years, many other incidents like this occurred at Kanadesaga. At length, on October 22, 1784, a treaty of peace was made between the United States and the Six Nations; hostilities came to an end; and soon the white man's civilization took the places of the red man's villages and castles, cornfields and orchards.

### *The Passing of the Indian's Ownership.*

After the Revolutionary war, Massachusetts claimed a large share of the territory of western New York under grants from Great Britain. On December 16, 1786, the commissioners of the two states agreed upon a settlement, by which Massachusetts ceded to New York the right of sovereignty and government, but New York ceded to Massachusetts the right of pre-emption of the soil from the Indians to 230,400 acres between the Owego and Chenango rivers, and also to all the lands in New York west of a line "beginning in the north boundary line of the State of Pennsylvania in the parallel of 42 degrees north latitude at a point

distant 82 miles west from the northeast corner of the State of Pennsylvania on Delaware river \* \* \* and from said point of beginning running on a due meridian north to the boundary line between the United States of America and the King of Great Britain," except one mile in width along the Niagara river.

This settlement was quickly followed by the efforts of enterprising gentlemen to secure possession of the Indian lands. One influential group of speculators was known as the Genesee Land Company. At its instigation, a council was held at Kanadesaga on November 30, 1787, at which the sachems of the Six Nations leased to the Land Company for 999 years a vast region comprising all of New York State west of Canada Creek at a rental of \$2,000 a year. This treaty was signed by forty-six Indian chiefs, including the famous Cornplanter.

The Genesee Land Company, however, had two strong rivals in Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham, who, at a council held at Buffalo Creek on July 8, 1788, secured a modification of the long lease, by which Phelps and Gorham secured the lease of all that portion comprising the Massachusetts pre-emption rights. For this privilege they agreed to pay Massachusetts a fair compensation and to the Indians \$1,000 a year. This latter sum was payable in cattle to be delivered to the Indians at Kanadesaga.

About July 13 or 14, another council was held at Kanadesaga, at which the Rev. Mr. Kirtland, acting as Commissioner for Massachusetts in the above transaction, proclaimed the treaty. Over eighty warriors were present on this occasion.

The limitations of this paper will not permit us to enter into all the intricacies of the ensuing real estate transactions, but it is our purpose to relate enough to explain the origin of an interesting landmark at Geneva connected with the passing of Indian ownership, namely, the "Old Pre-emption Road."

In 1788, Col. Hugh Maxwell, a civil engineer, was engaged to survey the Massachusetts pre-emption line from the Pennsylvania

boundary to Lake Ontario, but owing to magnetic deviation of the compass or to some other cause his line diverged to the westward of the true meridian until, when it reached the lake, it was about two and one-half miles out of the way. This line is indicated by what is called the Old Pre-emption Road. It runs directly through the site of Kanadesaga. Later the true line was determined, and the area between the old and new pre-emption lines in which lies the present city of Geneva is called the "Gore."

### *The Beginnings of Geneva.*

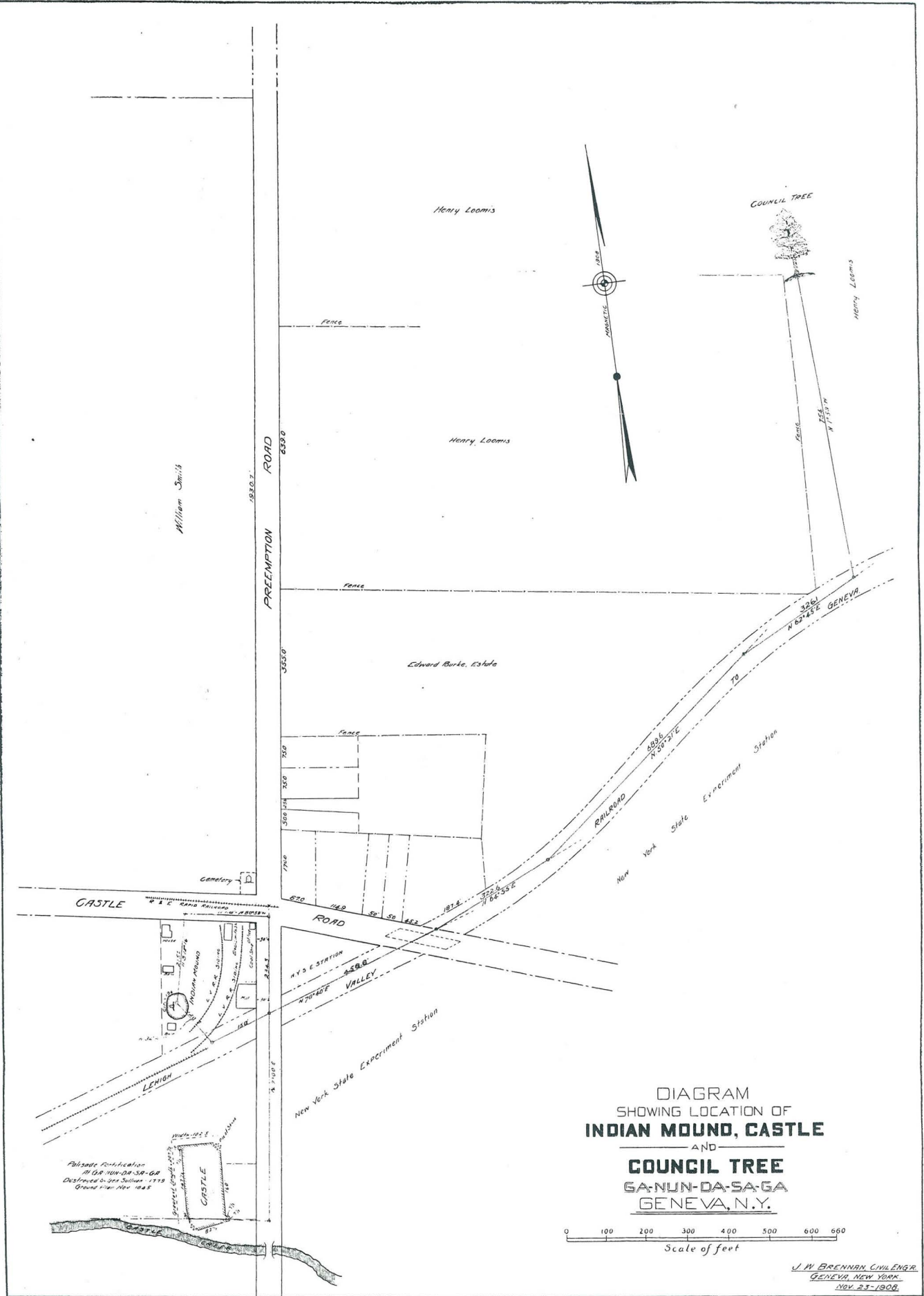
About the year 1788, the name of Kanadesaga was superseded by the imported European name of Geneva, but probably not in pursuance of the plan of the Commissioners of the Land Office\* who were authorized by an act of the Legislature passed in 1786, to lay out the Military Tract and "designate every township to be laid out by such name as they shall deem proper," and who with a lamentable lack of appreciation of the beauty and significance of Indian nomenclature proceeded to sprinkle the Iroquois country with a host of classical names as foreign in propriety as they were in the source from which they were taken.

From the journal of a traveler who went from Albany to Niagara in 1792, we catch a glimpse of infant Geneva as she appeared near the end of the eighteenth century. He says:

"Twelve miles west of Cayuga I struck the Canadesaga Lake — no inhabitant upon this road. This lake is the handsomest piece of water I ever beheld; its length and breadth nearly that of Cayuga into which it empties. Upon a pretty slope on the new part of the lake stands a town called Geneva. It has a fine effect from the opposite shore but disappoints you when you arrive at it. It consists of about twenty log houses, three or four frame buildings, and as many idle persons as can live in them. Eighteen miles lower on the same lake stands the Friends' Settlement

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\* The Commissioners were Governor George Clinton, Secretary Lewis A. Scott, Attorney-General Egbert Benson, and Treasurer Gerard Bancker. Simeon DeWitt was State Engineer at the time.



MAP OF SURVEY MADE FOR THE AMERICAN SCENIC AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY SHOWING THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE SITE OF THE SENECA CASTLE, OF THE EXISTING BURIAL MOUND AND OF THE EXISTING COUNCIL TREE OF KANADESAGA (OR GA-NUN-DA-SA-GA), AT GENEVA, N. Y.

founded by Jemima Wilkinson. There are eighty families in it. Each has a fine farm and are quiet, moral and industrious people."

Between 1797 and 1799, the old Indian trail had been converted into a coach road, so that a stage coach starting from Fort Schuyler (Rome) on September 30, 1799, arrived at Geneva in the afternoon of the third day with four passengers. During the winter of 1798-99, two stages, one of them a mail stage, ran from Geneva and Canandaigua to Albany weekly. A writer in 1799 says:

"Very few places of the size now exceed Geneva, either as to the style of the buildings, the beauty of the adjoining country or valuable improvements. The number of sail boats have greatly increased on the lake and the sloop finds constant employment; and in addition to their comforts, a person from Scotland has established at Geneva a very respectable brewery which promises to destroy in the neighborhood the baneful use of spirituous liquors. The apple and peach orchards left by the Indians yield every year abundance of fruit for the use of the inhabitants, besides making considerable cyder; so much so that one farmer near Geneva sold cyder this year to the amount of \$1,200."

The temptation to follow the development of Geneva, from these small beginnings, to the beautiful, cultured and industrious village of to-day must be resisted both for lack of space and as being beyond the purpose of this paper; and in conclusion we must content ourselves with a brief glance at three interesting sites connected with the history of Kanadesaga—the place of the old Fort, the Burial Mound, and the Council Tree.

### *The Last Traces of the Old Fort.*

In the autumn of 1848, the eminent archaeologist E. G. Squier made an investigation of the Indian town sites of New York, under the auspices of the New York Historical Society and the Smithsonian Institution. The results of his investigations were published in the second volume of the Smithsonian Institution's "Contributions to Knowledge," and in 1851 were republished by

Mr. Squier under the title "Antiquities of the State of New York." On page 85 is a sketch of the palisade work and the Burial Mound at Kanadesaga. The following is what Mr. Squier says:

"The traces of this palisaded work are very distinct and the outline may be followed with the greatest ease. Its preservation is evidently due to the circumstance that at the time of the cession of their lands at this point, the Senecas made it a special condition that this spot should never be brought under cultivation. 'Here,' said they, 'sleep our fathers, and they cannot rest well if they hear the plough of the white man above them.' The stipulation of the purchasers has been religiously observed.

"The site of this ancient palisade slopes gently toward a little stream called Ganundasaga creek which supplied the occupants of the fort with water. The ground is covered with a close green sward, and some of the apple trees planted by the Indians are still flourishing. In form, the work was nearly rectangular, having small bastions at the northwestern and southeastern angles. At 'a' and 'b' \* are small heaps of stones bearing traces of exposure to fire, which are probably the remains of forges or fireplaces. The holes formed by the decay of pickets are now about a foot deep. A fragment of one of the pickets was removed by Mr. L. H. Morgan of Rochester, in 1847, and is now in the State Cabinet at Albany. It is of oak."

To-day, not a vestige of the old stockade remains.

### *The Burial Mound.*

At the time of Sullivan's march, in 1779, Capt. Daniel Livermore noted in his diary, concerning Kanadesaga: "Here is a large burying place with several large monuments raised over some of their chiefs." This is the earliest allusion we have found to the Burial Mound which still exists about 350 feet north of the site of the fort. When Lewis H. Morgan visited the place in 1845, the mound was about 100 paces in circumference. When Squier visited it in 1848, it was about six feet high and covered with depressions marking the graves of the dead. "It would be in-

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\* In the northwest and northeast corners, respectively.

teresting," he said, "for a variety of reasons to have this mound excavated. By whatever people erected, it is certain that it was extensively used by the Senecas for purposes of burial."

Morgan, in his "League of the Iroquois" says:

"There is an interesting tradition connected with this burial mound. The Senecas say that once they had a protector, a mighty giant, taller than the tallest trees, who split the largest hickory for his bow, and used pine trees for his arrows. He once wandered west to the Mississippi and from thence east again to the sea. Returning homeward over the mountains along the Hudson, he saw a great bird on the water flapping its wings as if it wished to get out, so he waded in and lifted it on the land. He then saw on it a number of men who appeared dreadfully frightened and made signs to him to put them back again. He did so and they gave him a sword and a musket with powder and balls and showed him how to use them, after which the bird swam off and he saw it no more. Having returned to the Senecas at Ganundasaga he exhibited to them the wonderful implements of destruction and fired the gun before them. They were exceedingly terrified at the report and reproached him for bringing such terrible things among them and told him to take them away again, for they would be the destruction of the Indians, and he was an enemy to their nation who had brought them there. Much grieved at their reproaches, he left the council, taking the dreadful weapons with him, and lay down in a field. The next morning he was found, from some mysterious cause, dead, and this mound was raised over his body where he lay. It is averred by the Onondagas that if the mound should be opened a skeleton of supernatural size would be found underneath."

It is fortunate that the temptation experienced by Squier and some other more recent archaeologists has been resisted and that the mound has remained undisturbed, except on a single occasion when some unauthorized person made an opening and took out four skulls. The proceeding was witnessed, however, by the owner of the property, Mr. Wm. A. Smith, who reburied the skulls in the mound.

For many years, Indians were accustomed to visit this mound and stand by its side, in silent meditation. The last visit of this

sort occurred about four years ago. Beaten by the elements, and unprotected by any fence, the mound has been reduced in size until at the present time it is only 194 feet in circumference.

In 1889 the Legislature passed a bill appropriating \$750 for the purchase by the State of three acres containing the mound and \$250 for fencing and improvement, and placing it in the custody of the New York Agricultural Experiment Station but it failed to receive the Governor's signature. It is sincerely hoped that means may be found properly to conserve this sacred landmark of the old inhabitants of Kanadesaga.

### *The Kanadesaga Council Tree.*

About 2,550 feet northeast of the Burial Mound on the extensive farm of Mr. Henry H. Loomis, stands another landmark of the Senecas — a patriarchal elm known as the Council Tree. This magnificent tree, measuring 25 feet in the circumference of its trunk and 127 feet in the spread of its branches, marks the traditional meeting place of the Senecas when their deliberations were held out of doors. Under its branches, presumably, were negotiated several of the treaties affecting the destinies of Western New York.

This is one of several famous trees in New York State, most of which have disappeared, including the Big Tree which formerly stood near Geneseo and the Treaty Oak which formerly stood in Pelham Bay Park, New York city.

From the use of trees for shelter, not only at ordinary times, but also at times of councils, they came to occupy a conspicuous place in the figures of speech employed by the Indians and by white men in their speeches to the Indians. For instance, on September 21, 1753, Col. Wm. Johnson, in addressing the representatives of the Six Nations at Onondaga, said: "I am sorry to find on my arrival among you that the fine Shady Tree which was planted by your forefathers for your ease and shelter should be now leaning, being almost blown down by Northerly Winds." This was

an allusion to the covenant of friendship between the Iroquois and the English which had been strained severely by the intrigues of the French in Canada. Again he said to them: "Your fire now burns clearly at the old place. The Tree of shelter and protection is set up and flourishes."

There is so much of poetry, tradition, and history, associated with the Kanadesaga Council Tree that for these reasons, as well as for its natural beauty, it is greatly desired that means may be found for its protection and special care. In the course of years it must inevitably disappear, but with the modern science of tree surgery and prophylaxis, there is no reason why it should not be preserved for generations, a delight to the eye, and a living reminder of the vanished race which once populated the fertile fields of Kanadesaga.